

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments. Claims 8-13 are in the application. Claim 8 has been amended. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner rejected claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §112, stating that the "underside" of the groove was not described in the specification and that Fig. 1a clearly shows the combination being annular. Applicant has amended claim 8 to clarify the language and refer to the "interior surface" of the lug rather than the underside. This interior surface is the surface facing the interior of the groove. Thus, regardless of the orientation of the combination, this surface is always "interior."

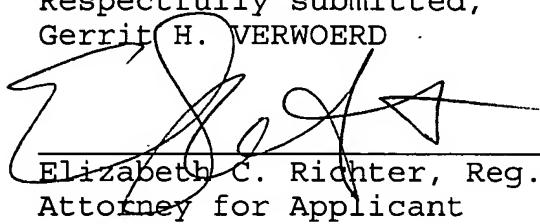
Claims 8-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Bosch* in view of *Reid* and *Benware*. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant has amended claim 8 to further clarify that the interior surface of the lug is inclined, and that the sealing rings have shoulders that correspond to this inclined surface of the lugs. Support for this amendment can be found in the specification, on page 10, first paragraph and in FIGS. 1c and 4a-4c. In contrast, the groove of *Benware* is rectangular and parallel to a floor of the groove.

The inclined lugs of the present invention causes the groove to form a conical shape rather than a cylindrical shape, as is the case with *Benware*. In the present invention, the sealing ring has a corresponding inclined shoulder tailored to the shape of this inclined lug. This conical shape of the groove has advantages in that it better compensates wear of the tips of the sealing rings, because the sealing rings can be displaced radially towards the axis until the inclined shoulder 31 of the sealing ring comes into contact with the inclined underside of the peripheral lug.

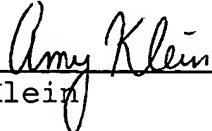
This feature is not taught or suggested by any of the cited references, taken singly or in combination. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,  
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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop: Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on February 11, 2009.

  
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